

# ILLIAM DHONE

A Manx Historical Drama which won the Cruinnaght  
Gold Medal, 1924,

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By J. J. Kneen.

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1926.

# ILLIAM DHONE

(A Manx Historical Drama.)

By J. J. KNEEN.

## CHARACTERS.

LADY OF MANN, the Countess of Derby. A very austere lady who brooks no interference with her commands and wishes.

LADY MOLINEUX, her Ladyship's daughter. A tyrannical little tartar, but a good sport.

SIR THOMAS ARMSTRONG, Governor of Castle Rushen. Very polite and courtly, Very much attached to the Derbys.

MR. RUTTER, her Ladyship's Chaplain. Became in turn Archdeacon and Bishop of Mann. Fond of Manx home-brewed ale. Always has his snuff-box at hand. A gentleman with a great vein of humour.

MR. BROOM, her Ladyship's Steward. An obsequious servant.

COLONEL THOMAS BIRCH and LIEUT. COLONEL MITCHELL, arrogant Round-heads. Duckenfield's Commissioners.

ILLIAM DHONE (WILLIAM CHRISTIAN). Receiver of Mann. Captain of the Manx Infantry. Known to Manx history as a great Manx patriot. Generally beloved by his countrymen, and hated by his enemies.

MISTRESS CHRISTIAN, his wife. A mild lady with a great affection for her husband and children.

GEORGE CHRISTIAN, his son. A chip of the old block. Has a way with him like his father.

EWAN CURGHEY, SAM RATCLIFFE, and JUAN CESAR, three gentlemen farmers and staunch supporters of William Christian.

As was the custom of the time they were addicted to the continual use of the snuff-box, and this applies to most of the male characters, with the possible exception of my Lady of Mann's retinue, who would not snuff in her presence. Duckenfield's Commissioners—Birch and Mitchell, however, would have no compunction in snuffing in her Ladyship's presence.

DICKY NELL, William Christian's servant. A faithful retainer. Noted for his specializing in large red handkerchiefs, a large watch, and a large snuff-box.

MRS. COLQUITT, the widow of one of Illiam Dhone's enemies. A bit of a shrew.

JONEY COLQUITT, her daughter. George's sweetheart. A very lovable lass, and very unlike her mother.

DEEMSTER NORRIS, one of the judges of Mann, and another of Illiam Dhone's alleged enemies.

RICHARD TYLDESLEY, Coroner of Rushen Sheading. Like most Coroners he was disliked by the people, and regarded as a sneak.

RUCHY TYLDESLEY, his son. A chip of the old block.

BENNETT, an officer in Castle Rushen.

CAILLAGH NY GUESHAG, a reputed witch, but her prophecies were always said to come true.

Officers, Members of the Court of Justice, the Keys, Messengers, Yeomen, Soldiers, Sailors, Fishermen, etc.

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## Scenes. (Period. The 17th Century).

I.—An apartment in Castle Rushen.

October 29th, 1651.

II.—A highway in Malew.

A day in October, 1651.

III.—Ronaldsway (interior).

September 12th, 1662.

IV.—A Court of Justice.

December 31st, 1662.

V.—Hango Hill.

January 2nd, 1663.

VI.—Scarlett.

A day in July, 1663.

VII.—Ronaldsway (exterior).

A day in August, 1663.

SCENE I. *An apartment in Castle Rushen.*

(Lady of Mann sitting listlessly at a table; knock at the door).

*Lady*: Entrez! (Enter Broom).

*Broom*: A letter, Madam. (Bows out).

*Lady*: (looking at the letter). From my dear husband! (Excitedly) Oh! I almost dread to open it! What dire news may it contain? (Breaks seal and reads) "My Dear Heart,—I have heretofore sent you comfortable lines, but, alas! (arises from the table and clutches her breast) I have no word of comfort, saying to our last and best refuge, which is almighty God, to whose will we must submit. The Governor of this place, Colonel Duckenfield, is General of the Forces which are now going against the Isle of Man, and however you might do for the present, in time it would be grievous and troublesome to resist, especially those that at this hour command three nations; wherefore my advice, notwithstanding my great affection to that place, is, that you would make conditions for yourself, children, servants and people there, and such as came over with me, to the end you may go to some place of rest where you may not be concerned in war; and taking thought of your poor children, you may in some sort of way provide for them; then prepare yourself to come to your friends above, in that blessed place of bliss, where there is no mingling of opinions. I have no more to say at this time, than the prayers for the Almighty's blessing on you, my dear Moll, and Ned, and Billy. Amen. Derby." Mon Dieu! What danger threatens him? What mean these strange words? He would ne'er have penned them lest he were in the direst straits! Those cursed Roundheads must hold him prisoner! What can I do to help him? (Knock at the door) Entrez!

*Armstrong*: (enters bowing). Fair day to you, my Lady!

*Lady*: Fair day Sir Thomas! Have you aught of news?

*Armstrong*: The news I bear is ill indeed, my Lady. Admiral Duckenfield has seized the Island in the name of the Commonwealth, and his forces are now marching on Castletown, his intention evidently being to lay siege to the Castle,

*Lady*: A murrain on the Commonwealth, and that scheming vagabond, Oliver Cromwell!

*Armstrong*: Amen! my Lady.

*Lady*: What action would you counsel, Sir Thomas?

*Armstrong* (bowing): It is for your Ladyship to order, her servant to obey.

*Lady*: Would to God we could withhold them!

*Armstrong*: Say the word Madam, and your wish shall be obeyed.

*Lady* (bravely): Then prepare the castle immediately for a siege. We shall ne'er submit to these Roundhead scullions!

*Armstrong*: The castle is already well provisioned, your Ladyship; and if those within prove loyal, we should be able to hold out against these vaunting brag-garts for some little while!

*Lady*: God grant that it be so, Sir Thomas, but I fear me that our puny strength will be as naught against Cromwell's riff-raff.

*Armstrong*: We can only do our best, my Lady.

*Lady*: And would my Lord Derby approve? I fear not. In fact, in a letter I have received he counsels otherwise.

*Armstrong*: You have lately received a letter from his Lordship?

*Lady*: Yes, and I fear it contains ill news, Sir Thomas.

*Armstrong*: God grant he is not in danger, Madam!

*Lady*: Alas! I fear his lines cannot be construed otherwise. He is undoubtedly in the greatest peril.

*Armstrong*: God forbid, Madam! I trust your fears are groundless.

*Lady*: Well, we must bide our time until further news arrives. But I fear the worst, Sir Thomas! Yes! I fear the worst. (With anguish) Mayhap I may ne'er hear from my beloved Derby more. Would to God that I were at his side to comfort him. (Knock) Entrez! (Enter Broom).

*Broom*: A letter, Madam,

*Lady*: From whom came it, Broom?

*Broom*: From Admiral Duckenfield, my Lady.

*Lady*: Are they so close?

*Broom*: They came to land yester even at Ramsey. E'en now they must be quite close to the town, Madam.

*Armstrong*: (looking out through window) 'Tis a truth, your Ladyship, Look! They come along the Ballasallagh road.

*Lady*: Verily! 'Tis as you say, Sir Thomas. We must act quickly!

(Enter *Lady Molineux* and *Mr Rutter*).

*Rutter*: The enemy is near the town, my Lady.

*Lady Molineux*: Turn the big guns on 'em, and blow them back from whence they came.

*Rutter* (mildly): And where might that be, my Lady Moll?

*Lady Molineux* (vindictively): The abode of evil spirits.

*Rutter*: (holding up his hands in horror) Lady Molineux, your profanity alarms me. I feel quite anxious about your future.

*Lady*: Silence! I have here a letter, and 'twould be as well were you all made acquainted with its contents.

*Lady Molineux*: From whom comes it?

*Lady*: Admiral Duckenfield.

*Lady Molineux*: The foul fiend seize him and all his Roundhead varlets!

(*Rutter* gasps and holds up his hands in horror and surprise).

*Lady*: Silence, madcap, and listen! (reads) "Madam!—I presume to return the answer to your Ladyship's letter sent to me by Mr Broyden, that I have earnestly solicited the Council of State, and my Lord General Cromwell, to commiserate the condition of the late Earl of Derby"—(excitedly) late Earl! What mean he? Have they done my noble Derby to death? (continuing)—"and his family, but they have since commanded me hither, for the reducing of this Island; and therefore according to the trust reposed in me, I shall by the help of God!"—

*Lady Molineux*: Cursed hypocrites! (*Rutter* horrified).

*Lady*: I wish you wouldn't interrupt, Moll! (continuing)—"I shall endeavour to lose no time in gaining such holds as are yet defended by your Ladyship, against those I serve, and hope to manage the same as becomes a soldier and a Christian, and I really believe, there is no way left for your family of avoiding utter ruin, but a present surrender of the Castles of Peel and Rushen to the state

of England; the delaying whereof, will render me unable to approve myself, Your Ladyship's servant, Robt. Duckenfield." Who brought this, Broom?

*Broom*: Two messengers, my Lady. They await an answer.

*Lady*: Bring them hither. (Exit Broom) What think ye of this? Things have come to a fine pass with us indeed.

*Lady Molineux*: Send Cromwell's hirelings about their business, mater.

*Lady*: An end to your idle chatter, Moll! 'Tis an affair not lightly to be discussed, and of most momentous importance to us. (Enter Broom with messengers) Have ye aught of news of my Lord Derby?

1st Messenger: The Earl was beheaded at Bolton in Lancashire on the fifteenth day of the present month! (All excited, talk *solto voce*).

*Lady* (wildly): You lie! You but tell me this to force me to surrender our Isle, but know ye, Sirrahs, that I hold it by commission from my Lord, and I will not give it up without orders from him, being obliged by my duty to obey the instructions of my husband.

1st Messenger: Seeing that the Earl is dead, Madam, that commission holds good no longer.

2nd Messenger: That is so, my Lady.

*Lady*: What assurances have I that the tale you bring hither is true?

1st Messenger: The assurances of a Christian gentleman, Madam!

*Lady Molineux*: (loftily) And who may that be, prithee?

1st Messenger: Admiral Duckenfield, Madam!

*Lady Moll* (scornfully): What! Duckenfield a Christian! (mirthfully) Hah! Hah! Hah! You verily amuse me, Sir! As tho' a vile Roundhead could be a Christian gentleman, forsooth! Hah! Hah! Hah! (1st Messenger shrugs his shoulders, but vouchsafes no answer).

*Lady* (annoyed): Will you hold your tongue, Moll. (To messenger) You must give me time to think it over.

1st Messenger: Time runs apace, Madam, and the Admiral's orders were for an immediate answer.

*Rutter*: I think 'twould be for the safety of us all, and our Isle as well, if you surrendered, my Lady.

1st Messenger: That is so, Sir! Admiral Duckenfield is but doing his duty. The Lord Commander's orders are that the Island must surrender, or be reduced. Wherefore, my advice, of two evils choose the lesser.

*Rutter* : I fear 'tis the only loophole we have, your Ladyship.

*Lady* : Alas! Is that your counsel, Mr Rutter?

*Lady Moll*. I would that you, and all such weak-kneed scullions as you, were out of the Castle, Mr Rutter.

*Rutter* (In meek surprise) *Lady Molineux*!

*Lady Moll* : Get you gone, sirrah! since you are afraid, and leave us alone. We are resolved to sell our lives and blood at a dearer rate than that. I shall follow my noble father!

*Rutter* : Your words cut like a leathern thong, my *Lady Molineux*!

*Lady Moll* : I would that a leathern thong were applied to you, Mr Rutter, It might have the effect of stimulating your ale-sodden brains into activity.

(*Rutter* gasps with amazement).

*Lady* : Bridle your tongue, *Moll*! (to Messenger) Return to your master, and tell him that I shall send him a letter to-night, containing my terms of surrender.

*1st Messenger* : I thank you, Madam! (*Broom* shows Messengers out).

*Lady* : Let us to work, Sir Thomas.

*Armstrong* : With pleasure, Madam.

(*Lady* and *Armstrong* seat themselves at a table, to draw up the terms of surrender. *Armstrong* writes at her dictation, occasionally remonstrating with her in undertone. *Lady* sometimes gets annoyed, stamps her foot and shows other signs of impatience. *Lady Molineux* and *Rutter* carry on a desultory conversation).

*Lady Moll* : I shall be glad to 'scape this cursed isle, Mr Rutter.

*Rutter* : My *Lady* should not speak thus. (piously) As 'tis by God's will we are placed herein.

*Lady Moll* : Fiddlesticks! Mr Rutter. You verily tire me!

*Rutter* (horrified) : *Lady Molineux*! How can you speak so?

*Lady Moll* : You're an old humbug. I don't believe there's aught of religion in you. (*Rutter* speechless, gasps with amazement).

*Lady* : \* \* \* \*  
(speaking more loudly, to impress *Armstrong* with something he does not agree with). That such arms and ammunition as his Lordship brought and provided at his own charge for the defence of his Island, may be transported by her Ladyship, with the rest of her goods, or that she may have a considerable value for the same.

*Armstrong* (copying against his will) ;

*Duckenfield* will never agree to those terms Madam.

*Lady* : (showing signs of annoyance) You would do well not to dictate to me, Sir Thomas.

*Armstrong* : I crave your pardon, my *Lady*! (continue *sotto voce*.)

\* \* \* \*  
*Lady Moll* : You are fond of a good drop of Manx home-brewed ale, Mr Rutter, are you not?

*Rutter* : 'Twould ill become us, *Lady Moll*. to refuse the creature comforts which a bountiful providence has so generously provided for us.

*Lady Moll* : Did your love for the amber wine of the barley inspire you to write that famous song of yours, Mr Rutter?

*Rutter* : Well, my *Lady*, I'm afraid I must admit that you are near the truth. A good foaming tankard of Manx home-brewed ale is one of the blessings for which we should be duly grateful.

*Lady Moll* : Oh, you old humbug! Forsooth you have more regard for ale than religion.

*Rutter* (mildly) : Judge me not too harshly, my *Lady Moll*. 'Tis true the amber fluid to which you refer has a mellowing effect on the poor shell we call a body.

*Lady Moll* : You old canting hypocrite!

*Rutter* : (in surprise) *Lady Moll*! *Lady Moll*!

\* \* \* \*  
*Lady* : (dictating) That all Officers, Soldiers, and Gentlemen, and others, upon the surrender of the Garrisons, shall march out with their travelling arms, clothes, moneys and other necessities, and them to enjoy without impediment or interruption during the aforesaid time.

(*Lady Moll* : Hums over a verse of *Rutter's* song in which *Rutter* joins).

"Let our hostess fill up the flagon,  
And let her good ale be brown;  
And let it spit fire like a dragon,  
Till our heads be the wisest in town;  
'Tis a life for a King,  
'Tis a life for a King,  
To wear such another crown."

*Lady* (rising from table imperiously) : What means this unseemly conduct? Mr Rutter, I am astonished that you should encourage this madcap.

*Lady Moll* : We cannot be miserable all the time, Mater. 'Tis of a surety bad enough being bottled up in this horrid old castle.

*Lady* : Have you no sense of responsibility, child? Know you not that we are in the direst straits?

(*Lady Moll*, mutters to herself),

*Lady* (sternly): Silence! Here, Mr Rutter, please scan this document. (Handing it to him).

*Rutter*: I thank you Madam. 'Tis a lengthy epistle (looks over it). Methinks it could not be improved, my Lady. 'Tis fortunate indeed we shall be if Duckenfield accedes to all your requests.

*Lady* (Taking document from him and handing it to *Armstrong*): Please give this to Mr Broom, and request him to have it delivered to Duckenfield immediately. Perhaps 'twould be better did he deliver it himself, some others are not to be trusted.

*Armstrong*: Your wish shall be obeyed, your Ladyship. (Bows, exit).

*Rutter*: I trust, Madam, that you will get to France or Holland in safety.

*Lady Moll*: Ah, let it be *La belle France, Mere!*

*Lady*: We shall see, my child.

*Rutter*: This Dutch ship is at Peel-town, is she not?

*Lady*: That is so, but a trusty messenger from Peel has brought me the ill news that Duckenfield has seized it, and I have requested that it be restored to its owner, and that I have command thereof, for my money, if it so pleases me.

*Rutter*: To where does she belong?

*Lady*: Amsterdam. (Enter *Armstrong*).

*Armstrong*: They have detained Broom, Madam.

*Lady*: Detained him? For what reason?

*Armstrong*: I know not, my Lady, but I have great misgivings that they mean us harm.

*Lady* (in alarm): What can we do, Sir Thomas?

*Armstrong*: Alas! I know not. We are in a serious case, and there is great discontent among our soldiers in the Castle also.

*Lady*: How is that, Sir Thomas?

*Armstrong*: I know not, Madam, unless it be that they are fomented by the courting of the besiegers without. A strange kind of terror seems to have laid hold of many of them. Both to-day, and yesterday, many of them have adventured their necks by, desperate leaps out, others wrenched open a sally-port by the help of those without, and the enemy has become possessed of the outward wall of the tower.

*Lady*: Why did you not acquaint me with this news before, Sir Thomas?

*Armstrong*: I desired not to make your Ladyship unduly anxious.

*Lady*: But surely, Sir Thomas, there must be a sad lack of discipline in the Castle,

*Armstrong*: We have done our best, your Ladyship, we cannot keep them in hand any longer.

*Lady Moll*: Why don't you make an example of one or two by shooting them?

*Lady*: Moll is right. Desperate situations require desperate remedies, Sir Thomas.

*Armstrong*: Violence should not be resorted to if it can be avoided. That should be always a dernier resort.

*Lady*: And is not this a dernier resort, Sir Thomas, when your soldiers refuse to fight for you, and become cringing cowards in the face of the enemy?

*Armstrong*: A resort to violence would gain us nothing, your Ladyship, and only jeopardize our already serious position.

*Lady*: Then what would you counsel, Sir Thomas?

*Armstrong*: Alas! I know not, unless it be to surrender.

*Lady*: That is ill advice indeed.

*Lady Moll*: 'Tis like you, Sir, nought but surrender in your mind. Shame on you!

*Armstrong*: 'Tis better to surrender with honour than to submit with shame, Lady Molineux (Enter officer). Well! what news, Bennett?

*Bennett*: Ill enough, Sir Thomas.

*Armstrong*: How are things within the Castle?

*Bennett*: In sooth Sir, they could not well be worse. The soldiers have got altogether out of hand.

*Armstrong*: And how are things without the Castle?

*Bennett*: They have landed their great guns, grands, shells, and mortar pieces, so 'tis evident they mean business.

*Armstrong*: That will do. To your post again, Bennett, and keep those devils well in hand. If they disobey orders, threaten them with your pistol. Perhaps that would bring them to a right frame of mind.

*Bennett*: I'll do my best, Sir. (Salutes, exit).

*Lady*: Things have come to a serious pass, Sir Thomas. You and Mr Rutter had better go out and parley with them. Tell Duckenfield that you come from me as commissioners.

*Armstrong*: Then let us go immediately, Mr Rutter. The sooner 'tis accomplished the better.

*Rutter*: That is so. I like not their warlike preparations. (Piously, holding up his hands in benediction). Give us peace in our time, O Lord! (Lady Moll shrugs her shoulders).

*Lady* : You must make the best terms you can with them.

*Armstrong* : We shall do our best, your Ladyship. Come Mr Rutter, let us away! (exeunt).

*Lady* : You have heard, Moll, of your father's sad fate?

*Lady Moll* : Yes, mother. He was a brave and valiant man. Had he been on the Island, we should not have been in so sad a case.

*Lady* : You are right, my child. Where are Ned and Billy?

*Lady Moll* : Playing at soldiers in one of the turrets, and as regardless of danger as though they were in the playground of the schoolhouse.

*Lady* : The dear children. 'Tis as well they know not the danger which o'ershadows us. (Knock). Entrez!

(Enter Armstrong, Rutter, Birch and Mitchell).

*Birch* : We come from the Admiral, Madam.

*Lady* : Then state your business, sir.

*Birch* (ironically) (offering the Countess a document) : These, Madam, are the conditions under which Captain Christian has delivered up the Island.

*Lady* : (in surprise) Captain Christian!

*Birch* : Yes, Madam. (Lady takes document and reads).

*Lady* (reading) : "That the castles of Rushen and Peel, with all the arms, ammunition, ordnance, and other materials of war shall be delivered up by 11 o'clock tomorrow in the forenoon, into the hands of such officer or officers as the Commander-in-Chief shall appoint. That all goods in both the above named castles, belonging to the Countess of Derby—late Lady of Mann." Late Lady! What means Duckenfield by this?

*Mitchell* : He means, Madam, that you are now deposed.

*Lady* : But this is a gross injustice. I will not hear of it.

*Birch* : Pray compose yourself, Madam. Read on! (Lady continues document).

*Lady* :—"shall at the time specified, be inventoried and secured, and further referred and submitted to the Parliament of England. That the knights, gentlemen and other persons whatsoever, in both the said castles, shall have quarter, and be protected by the Commander-in-Chief, from any harm whatsoever, against their persons, by any soldier under his command, or any other person in this Island, and shall not have any wearing apparel taken from them, or private moneys out of their pockets; and such of the natives as are in the said castles shall

have liberty to return to their several habitations. That the Countess of Derby—late Lady of Mann—with her children and servants, have liberty to transport themselves to England, there to make what application to the Parliament she shall think fit, and from thence to pass into Holland or France if she please. Signed : Thos. Birch, Wm. Mitchell, Thos. Armstrong and Samuel Rutter. (Hands it back to Birch).

*Birch* : Please attach your signature hereunto, Madam, showing your approval thereof.

*Lady* : No place is here mentioned but the Isle of Man. The neighbouring islands have not surrendered. Permit me to retire to Peel Castle with my children, that I may rest there until I can pass over into France or Holland, and find a place to lay my head.

*Mitchell* : Methinks the document sufficiently explicit.

*Birch* : Certainly, Madam, you may abide in the Island until such time as you find it convenient to remove hence.

*Lady* : And no mention is made in the document concerning my rights, or that of my son, over this our Kingdom of Mann.

*Mitchell* : Such rights exist no longer, Madam. The Island now belongs to the State of England, and the Lord Protector will appoint a Governor.

*Birch* : These are the terms of agreement, Madam, I cannot answer more.

*Lady* : Then I must submit.

*Birch* : Methinks 'twould be as well Madam.

*Lady* : Do you counsel me likewise, Sir Thomas?

*Armstrong* : The attaching of our signatures thereunto, Madam, is indicative of our minds.

*Rutter* : We have done our best, your Ladyship. I think you would do well to accept the document as it stands.

*Lady* (passionately) : I would have held out this Island against you knaves as long as the sea continued to flow around it. Till the shoals which surround it had become safe anchorage—till its precipices had melted beneath the sunshine—till of all its strong abodes and castles, not one stone remained upon another,—would I have defended against you villainous, hypocritical rebels, my dear husband's hereditary dominion. This, our Kingdom of Mann, would have been yielded only when not an arm was left to wield a sword, not a finger to draw a trigger in its defence. But treachery has done what force could never have done. When we had

foiled various attempts upon our Island by open force, treason has accomplished what you, with your floating castles, had found too hazardous an enterprise—a base rebel whom we nursed in our own bosoms has betrayed us.

*Birch* (impatiently) : Madam, you waste time.

*Lady* : You shall hear me out, sirrah, and then go back to your villainous employers and tell them that I think as light of them as the dirt 'neath my feet.

*Birch* : Have a care, Madam.

*Mitchell* : You insult the Lord Protector at your peril.

*Lady* : (ignoring them) You all know the traitorous wretch of whom I speak, 'tis William Christian. One who has eaten of my Lord—his sovereign's—bread, and drunk of his cup, even from childhood—for his fathers have been faithful servants to the Lordship of Mann and the House of Derby. He himself has fought bravely by my husband's side, and enjoyed all his confidence; and when the Earl last left the Island, he recommended to me, amongst other instructions, to continue my confidence in Christian's fidelity.

*Birch* (impatiently) : But, my dear Mad—

*Lady* (interrupting) : I obeyed, although I never loved the man. He is cold and phlegmatic, and utterly devoid of that sacred fire which is the incentive to noble deeds. But, I must admit, that he is brave and wise, and experienced, and as the event has proved, possesses too much interest with the Islanders.

*Birch* : Madam, I must beg—

*Lady* : This Christian has headed a revolt against my rule. That he, born a gentleman, and bred under my Derby's own care in all that was chivalrous and noble—that he should forget a hundred benefits—that he should forget that kindly intercourse which binds man to man far more than the reciprocity of obligation—that all this should be done by William Christian, my vassal, my servant, nay, my friend, is a deed of ungrateful treachery, which even this age of treason will scarcely parallel.

*Birch* (anxiously sighing) : Are you finished, Madam?

*Lady* : Yes, allow me to sign the document (signs) God grant that I do justice to the welfare of my poor children.

CURTAIN. End of Scene I.

## SCENE II. A Highway in Malew.

(A motley crowd of soldiers, sailors, yeomen, fishermen and farmers. William

Christian harangues them from the top of a style).

*Christian* : My countrymen, 'tis not for myself I have taken this great step, but for you. Have I not been your friend and counsellor alway? (Sinister mutterings among the crowd).

*Voice* : Thou'v'sowl our country to the Sostnagh.

(Further murmurings, some assume a hostile and threatening attitude).

*Christian* : Were it not better for our country to be delivered over to the state of England, than to be put to fire and the sword?

1st *Voice* : No, no! we'll ne'er submit to England!

2nd *Voice* : Shut up, thou bleb, (General excitement babel of voices, free fights, etc.).

*Christian* : Calm yourself, friends, and hearken to me.

*Voice* : Hou! on bhoys, give Illiam a fair chance (clamour subsides).

*Christian* : Was I not born among you—brought up among you. Speak I not the same Gaelic tongue as yourselves? Has any one of you e'er known me to do aught of wrong? Have I not always been your adviser, aye—e'en your brother?

*Voice* : Yes, Yes! Up the Receiver! Up Illiam Dhone! (murmurs).

*Christian* : Have I not always upheld your rights against the Lord when he has tried to crush them down? Did I not seek to advise him otherwise? But hark ye brethren, the Derbys are a noble race, I have naught of evil to say against them. They have always been my friends.

*Voice* : Shame on thee, Illiam Cristeen. Thou'rt hunting with the hounds and running with the hares. (general murmurings).

*Christian* : Yes, I repeat that the Derbys have always been my friends—and yours.

*Voices* : No, no, never! (general murmuring).

*Christian* : In spite of what I've done I love the Derbys not one whit the less. They have been your benefactors and mine in a hundred divers ways.

1st *Voice* : What have they done for us?

2nd *Voice* : Ay, that's the point, Yuan *Christian* : Believe not all you hear against the Derbys. Some say that my Lady Derby was making secret terms with the enemy to sell our country for a few pence.

*Voices* : 'Tis true, 'tis true. (Clamour).

*Voice* : Ay, she'd sell our Island and send us into slavery.

*Voices* : (general clamour) Down the Derbys! Down the Derbys!

*Christian* : Only one fault I had against the late Lord of Mann. You all remember that when he came here in 1643, he appointed Commissioners to compound for leases, consisting of some of his principal officers, who had themselves been prevailed upon by bribes to surrender their estates so that you might be hoodwinked. Was this an honourable act?

*Voices* : No, no! (commotion). Down the Derbys!

*Christian* : Did not your estates descend to you from ancient time? They were yours to barter or do with as you liked. But what did my noble Lord? He caused these commissioners to delude you simple countrymen into the persuasion, that you had no title deeds to your estates. You all know by now that you have bartered your birthright for a mess of pottage! After three lives, when your grandsons are dead, the estates which had belonged to you of old become the property of the Earls of Derby. Was this an honourable act?

*Voices* : No, no! Down the Derbys! (commotion).

*Christian* : But yet the Derbys are honourable men, and they have ever been your friends.

*Voices* : No, no! They are no friends of ours. Down the Derbys! (tumult).

*Christian* : Peace, my countrymen. You have all heard how the late Earl died a martyr's death in England.

*Voices* : Let him go! Down the Derbys!

*Christian* : Let us commiserate the sad fate which has befallen him, and have pity for the poor widow—the noble Countess—and her little children.

*1st Voice* : Waste no time in pity, they don't deserve it.

*Voices* : Down with the Derbys! Down the Derbys!

*Richard Tyldesley* (from the fringe of the crowd) : You're a traitor, Christian! To your Lord and Country as well.

*Voices* : Here's Tyldesley, the Coroner!

*Voice* : Ay, one of Derby's hirelings!

*Voices* : Down with Derby and all his officers!

*Tyldesley* : Why do you listen to a two-faced hypocrite like Christian? He'll do you in the end!

*Voice* : (ironically) Great Tyldesley, Coroner of Rushen, has spoken! (Laughter).

*Tyldesley* : Ay, you can laugh, my friends, but you mark my words, Christian,

at heart, is as false as hell itself.

*Voice* : Hark to Tyldesley, the sneaking Coroner of Rushen!

*Tyldesley* : Have a care, my friend!

*Voice* : He threatens us (great tumult).

*Tyldesley* : A simple lot of sheep ye are to listen to the voice of Christian. (Angry exclamations).

*Voice* : Shall we permit this sneaking hireling of Derby's to abuse us?

*Voices* : No, no! To the duckpond with him! Ay, ay! to the duckpond!

*Christian* : (tries to make his voice heard above the general babel, but is unsuccessful) Hearken ye my countrymen!

(Tyldesley is brought away struggling and a splash is heard, followed by a great uproar of laughter).

*Christian* : (after the noise has subsided) What I have done, my countrymen, has been for you. I have always placed my duty to my country 'fore all things, and no man can say that I am not a patriot.

*Voices* : Up Christian! Up Illiam Dhone!

*Christian* : I tried to save our country from perdition. I sent round the Fiery Cross to gather the clans together in defence of hearth and home. Have I done wrong? Has any one of you aught to say against me?

*Voices* : No, no!

*Christian* : I got the English Commonwealth to guarantee the continuation of enjoyment of your laws and liberties. (Rejoicing).

*Voices* : Down the Derbys! Up the Commonwealth!

General clamour, rejoicing, etc.).

CURTAIN. End of Scene II.

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SCENE III. Ronaldsway (Interior).  
(Eleven years after).

(Christian and his wife conversing).

*Christian* : Is this the end of all my dreams? all my most cherished desires? Must all my ambitions come to nought? I have ever fought the people's cause, but now, alas! they turn against me. Fool that I was to return to the Island! I should have sent for you and the children, Margaret.

*Mrs Christian* : 'Tis Colquitt, Tyldesley and their set who are poisoning the people's minds, Illiam. Heed them not. They cannot harm thee.

*Christian* : I fear me they are doing their utmost to bring about my downfall. Even the children in Castletown are trained to call me traitor. Well! 'Twas ever thus. The people are like a waving

field of corn, blown hither and thither as the wind listeth!

*Mrs. Christian* : Lose not heart, Illiam y chree. I am sure King Charles will be on thy side, and does not the Act of Indemnity protect thee?

*Christian* : They will twist the Act of Indemnity to suit their own ends, or else ignore it altogether. And King Charles is too far away to help me, I fear. It would take nigh on a month to reach London town from here, and much might happen in that time.

*Mrs. Christian* : But does not the Act of Indemnity condone all political offences committed during the Commonwealth?

*Christian* : Yes, but there seems to be a doubt as to whether it applies to Mann or not. We have our own government and laws, and an Act of Parliament does not apply to us, unless our Island be specifically mentioned therein.

*Mrs. Christian* : And is it not so mentioned?

*Christian* : They say not.

*Mrs. Christian* : Ewan, Juan and Sam will help thee all they can, and they have much influence in high quarters.

*Christian* : If the Earl be against me, all their help is in vain. And, as God is my witness, I sinned not against my noble Lady of Mann, his mother, in the least. I would have shed my last drop of blood in her defence. I shall not lightly forget that the noble Earl, her dear husband, treated me almost as a brother, and I should indeed have been a scullion to have treated my Lady of Mann otherwise. When my noble Lord, the good Earl, lost his head at Bolton, none mourned his fate more than I, for a kinderhearted master ne'er lived. (Knock).

(Enter Ewan Curghey, Sam Ratcliff and Juan Cesar).

*Christian* : Welcome, my friends! Pleased I am indeed to meet you. These be troublous times.

*Cesar* : We came hither to warn thee, Illiam. The Lord has issued a warrant for thy arrest.

*Christian* : Zounds, has it come to that?

*Ratcliff* : This is the work of Tyldesley and his crew, I always said he was a scheming rascal.

*Curghey* : The spawn of a meddling foreigner.

*Mrs. Christian* : Oh! Illiam! Flee while there is yet time!

*Curghey* : Yes, we have all prepared,

Illiam. A boat lies ready manned on the shore, which will put thee aboard old Quayle's lugger in less than five minutes, and then for the open sea, and thou'll reach London town ere they have time to get on thy track; for I'll warrant there's not a faster or trimmer lugger than old Quayle's in the South of Mann. It would show a clean pair of heels to the fastest revenue cutter.

*Christian* : Dost thou counsel me in such wise—to run away from my foes like a cringing coward, instead of facing them like a man?

*Curghey* : If thou tak'st not our advice, nought can save thee. E'en now the guard may be on their way here to seize thee.

*Mrs. Christian* : I implore thee to go, Illiam! What shall I do if thou art taken from me? Oh! hurry, hurry!

*Christian* : I cannot do such a cowardly action, Margaret. They dare not harm me. Let them do their worst. I defy them!

*Curghey* : If that be thy decision, we can be of no further use, and had best go, lest we be implicated with thee. Colquitt and his friends Tyldesley and Norris, are rogues of the deepest dye, and will stop at nothing to destroy thee: Ay, and all thy friends as well, should it suit their own ends.

*Ratcliff* : Have we not always been thy friends, Illiam? Thinkest thou that we counsel thee on this wise if 'twere not for thy own good?

*Cesar* : Ay, Illiam. Didn't we go to school together. Hast thou forgotten the many happy hours we spent together in the old Grammar School?

*Curghey* : I' faith yes, and many a good thrashing we have borne for each other too.

*Christian* : I have forgotten nothing, friends. Although I rose to such a high station in our Isle I never forgot my lowliest friend.

*Mrs. Christian* : I do implore thee to go, Illiam, ere it be too late. Come, I shall get the children and we'll all go together.

*Christian* : I cannot do it, Margaret;—do not ask me!

*Curghey* : Thou'rt a fool then, Illiam. If thou fleest not, mayhap thou shalt meet the same fate as the late Earl.

*Ratcliff* : Yes, tarry not, Illiam!

*Christian* : Friends! I may be a fool, but no man shall call me coward. I have fully made up my mind, and all your persuasions and appeals will not

alter it. I thank you for your counsel, and your interest on my behalf. I doubt not but what you mean me well, but it's impossible for me to fulfil your desires.

*Curghey*: Well, we have done our best to save thee, and if thou'rt taken, thou must suffer the consequences of thy own folly. Thou wert ever headstrong, Illiam, and I cannot help but admire thee for wishing to face thy foes. But I fear me, once they get thee into their hands they will give thee short shrift.

*Cesar*: Ay, come on lah, for the sake of thy good wife and children. What would they do without thee? Don't be a †bleb, lah! We know well enough thou'rt no coward.

*Mrs. Christian*: Oh, Illiam, do come! 'Tis true what Juan says. What would I do without thee, indeed! The light of my life would be extinguished, e'en as the snuffing out of a rushlight. You *must* come, Illiam, you *must* come. They *shall* not take thee from me.

*Christian*: Hush cree, be patient!

*Mrs. Christian*: How can I be patient, when even now the soldiers from the Castle may be on their way to take thee? Oh, Illiam! How can thou ask me to be patient under such terrible circumstances? Let us fly at once!

*Christian*: I cannot be a coward, Margaret, e'en though they kill me! Better to die bravely than to be henceforward branded as a coward! The die is cast. If I retain my freedom, well and good; if they destroy me, well—(shrugs his shoulders). In any case I shall face them as becomes a Manxman; and nothing, not even your prayers, dear wife, shall alter me from my purpose.

*Mrs. Christian*: Then, if that is thy resolve, dear husband, I shall stay with thee, they shall not part us.

*Curghey*: Once more I ask thee to save thyself.

*Christian*: I cannot, Ewan, I cannot.

*Ratcliff*: Thou'rt as crooked as a ram's horn, Illiam. Thou'lt neither be led nor driven.

*Christian*: Tempt me no further, friends. (Enter Dicky).

*Dicky* (in excitement): ‡Sidooryn. Cheh, cheh!

*Christian*: Soldiers!

*Dicky*: Yes, Master. They are coming up the road! They're after you! Fly! fly!

*Mrs. Christian*: Oh, Illiam love, let

us go out the back way. They won't see us. We may reach the boat in time.

*Curghey* (catching hold of Christian's arm): Come on, Illiam! For the sake of thy dear wife and children.

*Christian*: Too late! I am here, let them take me! (tramping heard without).

*Voice* (From without): Halt! (Loud knocking at the door): Open the door.

*Christian*: In whose name?

*Voice*: Lord Charles of Mann!

*Christian*: Let them in, Dicky.

*Mrs. Christian*: For God's sake don't—flee, Illiam!

*Dicky* (Waving a big pistol): I have my pistol here, master, shall I shoot them?

*Christian*: Do what thou'rt told and ask no questions.

(Dicky goes reluctantly to the door and lets them in. Enter officer and guard of soldiers).

*Officer*: William Christian, I arrest you!

*Christian*: By whose orders?

*Officer*: Charles, Lord of Mann! (Dicky goes round waving his pistol threateningly). Take that pistol from you silly devil, it might go off!

(One of the soldiers attempts to deprive Dicky of the pistol, but he gives the former a crack on the head with it, and runs out, much to the soldier's discomfiture).

*Christian*: With what am I charged?

*Officer*: Heading a revolt and insurrection against the Lady of Mann.

*Christian*: An I had not done so, she would have been in worse case.

*Officer*: Then you admit it.

*Christian*: Yes, up to a certain point.

*Officer*: I have nought to do with that, sir, my orders are to arrest you, and I hope we shall not have to use compulsion. Some of your followers, did they guess our errand, would rend us into pieces, and I have no mind to be treated so in this accursed God-forsaken Isle.

*Christian*: Were it a crime to be a patriot, then am I a criminal indeed. I ever placed my country before aught else. 'Tis true I handed over the Isle to Cromwell's forces, but what would have happened had I done otherwise? Our beloved country would have been put to fire and the sword, and my Lady of Mann would have had to give up the struggle in the end. 'Twould be as well for a mouse to struggle against a lion, as for our puny little Isle to attempt to dictate to the armed forces of the English State. What I have done was for my country's

† a fool.

‡ Soldiers, Flee, flee!

good, and the good of my fellow-countrymen, ay, and my Lady of Mann as well. Whatever the consequences of my action might be, I thank God that I have done my duty, and I face the future—e'en though it be death and dissolution—with a tranquil mind.

*Officer*: I am sorry that I am compelled to arrest you, Sir, but 'tis an unfortunate duty which devolves upon me. Let us waste no further time. We must away!

*Christian* (Embracing his wife): Good-bye, dearest heart! (Do not worry on my account, as probably I shall be able to clear myself. (Turning to officer). Now I am ready, officer. (Shaking hands with his friends). Goodbye, friends, till we meet again! (Officer places him between guard, and they march off. Mrs Christian faints).)

*Dicky* (enters): Oh, my dear Mistress! (chafing her hands) 'Tis a sad day! A sad day! \*Thie trieh, thie trieh!

*Curghey*: Ay, and he might have been safe by now, had it not been but for his stubbornness.

(They call in a female servant and restore Mrs Christian to consciousness).

*Mrs. Christian* (regaining consciousness): Oh, where is he—my dear husband? They've taken him away from me! Whatever shall I do? Ewan, Sam, Juan, you must help me!

*Curghey*: We shall do all in our power, Mistress Cristeen. What would you that we do?

*Mrs. Christian*: Take the lugger which you have ready, and fare to London town as quickly as sails will bear you. Seek audience with the King, and crave a written pardon. If you put the case clearly to him, I feel sure he will not fail to grant your request.

*Curghey*: We'll do our best. What say you, lads?

*Ratcliff and Cesar*: Ay, that we will!

*Dicky* (wringing his hands): Oh my dear master, \*\*Illiam Dhone boght! What will become of us now?

*Curghey*: Let us tarry not. Time runs apace. (All shake hands). Good-bye, Mistress Cristeen!

*Mrs. Christian*: Goodbye! and God grant that you be back in time.

*ALL*: Amen!

CURTAIN. End of Scene III.

#### SCENE IV. A Court of Justice.

(Deemster Norris, Members of the Court of Justice, the Keys, Yeomen, etc . .

Enter Christian between a guard of soldiers).

*Deemster*: I call upon the Coroner of Rushen to fence the Court.

*Tyldesley*: I fence the Court in the name of the Lord of Mann that no one shall brawl, threaten, or create any disturbance whatsoever, and that everyone shall answer to his name when he is called upon. I charge this audience to bear witness that this Court is fenced. I charge this audience to bear witness that this Court is fenced. I charge this whole audience to bear witness that this Court is now fenced.

*Deemster*: Read over the charge.

*Tyldesley*: "The mandate of Charles, Earl of Derby, Lord of Mann, for the trial of William Christian, September 12th, one thousand, one hundred sixty and two. Rebellion being a most heinous sin against God, calling for justice here on earth, without which that place where it is committed may well be said to be polluted by the blood of the most heinously guilty. But when a rebellion receives this further aggravation as to be notoriously evident to be very instrumental in the death of the Lord of that land"—

*Christian*: 'Tis a base lie! (Murmurs in Court).

*Deemster*: Silence in Court!

*Tyldesley*:—"And witha'll considering how much I am concerned so far as I may avenge a father's blood"—

*Voice*: Revenge is not justice!

*Deemster*: Seize that man! (scuffle in Court, man is brought out protesting).

*Tyldesley*:—"I take it to be a duty incumbent on me from all these considerations strictly to charge and command you (which I do by these presents) that forthwith upon sight hereof you proceed against William Christian of Ronaldsway for all his illegal actions and rebellions at or before the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred fifty and one, or at any time since, and that he be proceeded against according to the laws of that my Island. And I recommend 't to your care to see that this be speedily and effectually performed. I do therefore in this place think it most fit (that mercy and judgment may go together hand in hand)"—(Murmurs).

*Deemster*: Order!

*Tyldesley*:—"to command you to publish and declare that from henceforward

\* Miserable house.

\*\* Poor Brown William.

none in that my Island of Mann shall be molested either in life or estate for anything they shall have done or committed concerning that or any other Rebellion or Insurrection in the said Island, except such as you shall find to be notoriously guilty with the aforesaid William Christian of Ronaldsway, who is to be proceeded against according to the laws of that my Island before the 1st day of May next which shall be in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred sixty and three, after which day it shall not be lawful to proceed against any person whatsoever, the said William Christian of Ronaldsway only excepted. Given under my hand and Seal at Lathom the 12th day of September in the year of our Lord God one thousand six hundred sixty and two.—Derby.” “To all my officers both Civil and Military in my Island of Mann.”

*Deemster* (addressing Christian): At an inquiry holden before a jury of your own countrymen in Castle Rushen on the 14th day of November, in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred sixty and two, the said jury did find by revised depositions, proofs and evidences, that you—William Christian of Ronaldsway, Gentleman—were a traitor for your insurrection and treachery against the Right Honourable the Countess Dowager of Derby, and Lady Dowager of Mann, at such time as her Ladyship was in the year sixteen hundred fifty and one, fully entrusted and empowered with the State and Government of this Isle of Mann in the absence of the Right Honourable James, late Earl of Derby, Lord of the said Isle, at which time you assumed the power unto yourself in becoming the head of the said insurrection and depriving her Ladyship and his Lordship and heirs thereof by that means, and therefore the said Jury do indict you of treason.

*Christian* (sarcastically): A jury of illiterates!

*Deemster*: William Christian! This Court deeply deplores and regrets the sad state into which you have brought yourself. The late Lord of the Isle placed you in an honourable position of great trust, and you failed in your duty to your Liege Lord and to your Country. Before leaving the Island, the late Earl, Lord of Mann, empowered the Countess to act for him in every respect during his absence. The Insular Infantry was placed under your command, and the

late Lord had such confidence in your fidelity and attachment to his family that he commended his noble Countess and their three children to your especial guardianship. We have seen how you discharged this trust. You used the Infantry which you commanded to further your own base ends, and you handed over the Island to the Parliamentary forces. Have you aught to say why the judgment of this Court should not be pronounced upon you?

*Christian*: I have nought to say, except that I am innocent. I have already handed in a written defence, which I fear will never see the light of day. It would avail me little to say anything further in my defence which might help me. I commit myself further into the hands of the Lord of Heaven and Earth. I expect little mercy from you, and I ask no favours at your hands. You can do as you please with my body, but my soul is in God's keeping. When I look around me I behold nought but the faces of mine enemies, and therefore 'twould be idle for me to say further in mine own defence. I still maintain mine innocence; I am as innocent of the charge which the present Earl of Derby has seen fit to bring against me as a child unborn. That is all I have to say to you, your Honour. E'en though I go before a higher tribunal than aught on earth, nothing will make me flinch from the steadfast purpose I have ever placed before me, "The truth before the world." This has been my motto from my youth up, and nothing will turn me from it. So now you can do your worst with me, which at best is but little, for I rest assured that God will watch over me and protect me unto the end!

*Deemster* (putting on black cap): William Christian, you stand guilty of most notorious treason, which merits the strictness of the law, a most heinous and ignominious death, being hanged and quartered and your head smitten off, and afterwards drawn with wild horses, and the quarters of your body severed, and set one on one of the towers of the Castle, and so in the several market towns as is recorded in an ancient statute of this Isle for treason. Nevertheless, upon the earnest petition of your wife and consideration of her very disconsolate condition, we have thought fit that the sentence of death pronounced upon you shall be, that you be brought to the place of execution called Hango

Hill, and there shot to death, that thereupon the life may depart from your body. And may the Lord God have mercy on your soul.

CURTAIN. End of Scene IV.

SCENE V. *Hango Hill.*

(Christian standing before a file of armed soldiers, three in number, makes his dying speech. Officers, yeomen, populace, etc., gathered about. Caillagh ny gueshag appears and utters a prophecy. Dicky threatens the firing squad with his pistol, and is secured, and brought away fighting desperately).

*Christian:* Gentlemen, and all who accompany me to the gate of death,—You expect that I should say something at departing, having had no liberty since my imprisonment, to acquaint you with the sadness of my sufferings, which flesh and blood could not have endured, without the power and assistance of God, into whose hands I now commend my spirit. What services I have done for that noble family by whose power I am now to take my last breath, I dare appeal to themselves, whether I have not deserved better things from some of them than the sentence of my bodily destruction and seizure of my poor estate. I advised with several gentlemen concerning his gracious Majesty's Act of Indemnity, by which they told me, that there was no doubt that all actions committed in the Isle of Man, and all other places within his Majesty's dominions, were pardoned by this Act of Indemnity. Whereupon, and having been forced to absent myself from my poor wife and children for a long period, being all that time under persecution, I did with great content and satisfaction return into this Island, hoping then to receive the comfort and sweet enjoyment of my friends and my poor family. But, alas! I have fallen into the snare of the fowler. May the blessing of Almighty God be with you all, and preserve you from violent death, and keep you in peace all your days. (He falls on his knees and passes a few moments in silent prayer, rises cheerfully, and addresses the soldiers appointed for his execution).

*Christian:* Now for you, who are appointed by lot my executioners, I do freely forgive you. (To the populace) I beseech all of you to pray for me. There is but a thin veil 'twixt me and death;

once more I request your prayers, for now I take my last farewell (the soldiers approach him to bind him). Trouble not yourselves, or me, for I that dare face death in whatever form he come, will not start at your fire and bullets, nor can the power you have deprive me of my courage. Please give me a piece of paper. (The soldiers hand him a piece of white paper, which with the utmost composure, he pins to his breast, to direct their aim). Hit this, and you do your own work and mine. (He stretches out his arms). Into thy hands, O God, I now commend my spirit! (The soldiers fire and he falls dead. One soldier fires in the air, one at the ground, and the other—said to be an Irishman—kills him).

*Caillagh* (from the fringe of crowd): May Christian's enemies be accursed for evermore! May their names perish utterly from off the face of the earth! May their lands be divided among strangers! May their heirs seek their bread from door to door! May dread spectres afflict their consciences while one of them remains alive! May the races of Colcad, Tyldesley and Norris cease to exist, even as the morning vapours disappear when the sun flushes the east with gold! May the Christians come into their rights again and flourish at Ronaldsway as of yore! May seven great curse of curses rest upon the heads of their enemies! And may churchstones be found in all their dwellings!

*Voices:* Amen.

(Officers attempt to seize her, but the populace assume a hostile and threatening attitude, which causes them to desist).

CURTAIN. End of Scene V.

SCENE VI. *Scarlett.*

(Joney Colquitt sitting on garden seat beside the porch of the house, singing a Manx air, while she knits busily. She stops singing, and speaks to herself).

*Joney:* The curse of the Clan Cristeen! The curse of the Clan Cristeen!

(Enter George Christian).

*George* (taking hold of her hands): Now, I've caught you talking to yourself again, 'tis not the first time neither. What were you talking about, little girl, eh?

*Joney:* I was thinking of old Caillagh ny gueshag's prophecy, George.

*George* (teasingly): What foolishness is there at thee now at all? Caillagh ny gueshag is a silly old woman, who,

had she her rights, would be rolled down Slieau Whallian into the Curragh Glass.

*Joney*: You cannot deny but that her prophecies have come true. It is the curse of the Clan Cristeen I was thinking about, George. The old witch said that all the enemies of Illiam Dhone would vanish entirely, e'en as the frosts and snows of winter dissolve away at the coming of Spring. And is it not all coming true? Look at our family itself, my father thrown from his horse and killed, and my poor brother killed on Scarlett cliffs, whilst after the gulls' eggs? Now all that are left of our family are my mother and myself, and I suppose our turn will come next.

*George*: Tut, tut! Don't be a thoot yah!

*Joney*: O George! I have had nought but trouble all my life. I feel sometimes as though I were in danger of losing my reason. And people do say, George, that talking to oneself is a sign of insanity. 'Tis the curse of the Clan Cristeen, George;—the curse of your father crying aloud for blood and vengeance!

*Voice* (sepulchral): Ay, the Curse of the Clan Cristeen!

*Joney* (with great emotion): Oh George,—What was that?

*George* (taking her in his arms): Calm yourself, darling. I heard nothing.

*Joney*: I am sure I heard someone speaking.

*George* (puts her sitting down): I'll have a look round.

*Joney* (to herself): 'Twas his voice I heard! (George returns).

*George*: I see no one, sweetheart. (caressing her) You are a silly little girl! You shouldn't believe in foolish old women's tales!

*Joney*: But they are all coming true, George.

*George*: Never mind, y chree, when you marry me you will only help to fulfil the witch's prophecy.

*Joney*: What mean you, George?

*George*: Why, Caillagh ny gueshag only prophesied that the names would become extinct, so if you change yours from Colquitt to Christian the prophecy will come true.

*Joney*: Ah, George, jest not lightly. To our family her prophecy has had a real significance.

*George*: Forgive me if I hurt your feelings, Joney, but I do not believe in such silly old women's tales. What has

happened would have come to pass e'en had my father ne'er existed.

*Joney* (shaking her head): I have been thinking very seriously of late, George, and I think 'twould be better for both of us did we see less of each other. 'Twould not be wise for you to think of mating with a daughter of one of your father's enemies. See how the parish would talk. We have done wrong in keeping company, George, and if we can now separate forever the pain we may feel will be but a just penalty for our error. We should ne'er have met; meeting, we should part as soon as possible. Leave me farewell, George, and forget that we have ever seen each other.

*George* (anxiously): Joney, are you bereft of your senses that you speak thus? (taking her in his arms). Joney! Joney! I shall never forget you, and never give you up, nay, even though the whole world were against the union.

*Joney*: You must, George, you must.

*George*: Why should the feud of our fathers, which unhappily led to my father's death, be appeased by our sorrow and affliction? You are my sweetheart. I am the man whom heaven has assigned to you. Why should we separate for the fault of others?

*Joney*: Oh George, tempt me no further. You know your mother would not agree to the match, and my mother is against it too. Use your own reason—consider the injury you would do yourself by marrying into a family over whose head hangs the curse of Clan Cristeen—the curse of your own family would recoil upon your head—forget me—absent yourself from me till—till—

*George*: Till when, Joney, till when?

*Joney*: Till you can bear to think of me only as a friend and sister.

*George*: That is a sentence of eternal banishment indeed, and one to which I will never submit. It's no use, Joney, all your arguments and persuadings will not move me. I have made up my mind to marry you, and marry you I will, in spite of all opposition. I care not a jot or tittle what the world may say. 'Tis a business which only concerns our two selves. Now, what have you to say, Joney?

*Joney* (more cheerfully): Oh, what can I say, I suppose it's your own way you'll have in the end, so I might as well hold my peace.

*Voice* (From within the house): Joney!

*Joney*: There's mother calling. I must go in, George. Since she has taken these

plaguey rheumatics there's no living with her! Goodbye, George!

*George* (caressingly): Goodbye, sweetheart. I'll be putting a sight on you to-morrow again.

*Joney*: Well, I suppose I can't stop you, you silly boy! People say your father would always have his own way, and methinks you are much like him—at least in that respect.

*Voice* (impatiently from within the house): Joney!

*Joney*: Oh dear, there's mother again—I must run. (Affectionately) Goodbye George! (Exit Joney, George waving his cap).

*George*: Goodbye! (Ruminatingly). The Curse of the Clan Cristeen!

*Voice* (sepulchral): Ay, the curse of the Clan Cristeen!

*George*: What was that? (looks round him). I could swear I heard something. Is it possible that there's aught in the Caillagh's prophecy? I can't believe it—but still—Ah, well, there are some queer happenings on the earth sometimes, which no one satisfactorily accounts for. But I care not, for come what will, I am determined that Joney shall be my wife. Hang the Caillagh and her prophecies. 'Tis fit to make me feel creepy. (Enter Dicky, whistling).

*Dicky*: I thought I'd find thee here, George. Thy mother wants thee at home.

*George*: Right, I'll be off at once.

*Dicky*: She said that matter of great import waits thee. Methinks it came from Lunnin.

*George*: How dost thou know that?

*Dicky*: 'Tis not much escapes Dicky.

*George*: Thine ears are over long, Dicky. 'Tis to be hoped that thou'lt not mouth our affairs over all the parish.

*Dicky*: Masther George, I've been with thy family all my life—I nussed thee when thou wert a baby—I watched thee grow up into a big \*stuggey of a boy—I held thine arm to show thee how to shoot thy fust arra, an' now, listen to what thou'rt saying to me. George, †my guilley—I didn't think it of thee. No, I didn't indeed! (Dabs his eyes with a big red handkerchief).

*George*: Mind me not, Dicky. I did but jest. What is the matter of mighty importance?

*Dicky*: Thou'd batther go an' find out for theeself. 'Twould be better for thee if thou attended thine own business in-

stead of hangin' around after the Colcad's wench. God knows thy family has had plenty of bad luck without makin' things wuss.

*George*: Look here, Dicky. I've told thee afore that thine ears and tongue are over long (threateningly). And if I hear thee saying one word more about Mistress Colcad I'll give thy tongue such a twist thou'lt never forget it.

*Dicky* (in alarm): ‡Hiarn bannee mee! Well, well! 'Tis a fair wench is the Colcad's daughter, and I don't blame thee, George. But she's of Saxon blood, an' I rede thee beware—and then there's the curse of the Clan Cristeen.

*Voice* (sepulchral): Ay, beware of the curse of the Clan Cristeen.

*Dicky* (in affright): What was that? Didst thou hear aught?

*George*: Methought I did. Mayhap 'twas the wind in the trammon trees.

*Dicky* (shaking his head): 'Twas a sign, George—and there's another thou want to keep thine eye on.

*George*: Who's that?

*Dicky*: Rutchy Tyldesley.—A §skeat like his father before him.

*George*: Hast thou seen him lately?

*Dicky*: That I have indeed!

*George*: Dost thou know aught that would benefit me in the telling?

*Dicky*: Thou'lt find out soon enough for theeself.—But watch Rutchy Tyldesley as thou would the devil! (Exit).

*George*: H'mph! 'Tis a queer mortal is Dicky. Well, well, I expect mother will be waiting for me. (Exit).

(Enter Rutchy Tyldesley from other side).

*Tyldesley*: So, so! my gallant George. Thou'rt after Joney Colcad still, in spite of all people say.

(Joney comes out and looks about).

*Tyldesley*: Fair day to thee, Mistress Colcad (taking off his cap and making a sweeping bow). For whom art thou looking?

*Joney*: Oh, no one in particular (cuttingly). Not thee at any rate.

*Tyldesley* (unabashed): If I may make so bold as to hazard a guess, I should sav 'twas George Christian.

*Joney*: Why dost thou think so?

*Tyldesley*: For I saw him leave this selfsame spot but a few moments ago.

*Joney*: Wert thou playing spy?

*Tyldesley* (suavely, though annoyed): What dost thou mean, Mistress Colcad?

*Joney* (haughtily): E'en as I say sirrah.

\*lump. † my boy.

‡ Lord, Bless me!

§ sneak,

*Tyldesley* : 'Tis by accident I am here, but such is not the case with Christian.

*Joney* : 'Twould be better didst thou mind thine own business.

*Tyldesley* (angrily) : Had I mine own way Christian would be shot, e'en as his father.—And all cursed Manxmen with him.

*Joney* : Wretch! How can'st thou speak so, knowing that the Curse of the Clan Cristeen hangs over thine own head as well as mine.

*Tyldesley* : Pish! Thou speakest utter nonsense!

*Joney* : Events have not proven so up to the present.

*Voice* (sepulchral) : Beware the curse of the Clan Cristeen!

*Tyldesley* (looking round in alarm) : What was that?

*Joney* : I heard nought. 'Tis thy evil spirit accusing thee!

*Tyldesley* (with more composure) : Throw over this son of a traitor and marry me.

*Joney* : Marry thee, indeed! When I marry, it will be to a man, not a serpent!

*Tyldesley* : Thou hast a biting tongue, Mistress Joney; and I must e'en put a curb thereon when we marry.

*Joney* : To whom art thou speaking, sirrah? I wouldn't marry thee if thou wert the last man in the world. Pah! I loathe thee, Richard Tyldesley!

*Tyldesley* (annoyed) : Thou canst not marry George Christian. Too well thou knowest that thyself.

*Joney* : Then I shall never marry.

*Tyldesley* : But thou still have hopes of ensnaring Christian. That thou shalt never do—I shall see thee dead first.

*Joney* : Coward! how darest thou speak so to a defenceless woman? Were I a man I'd thrash thee till thou shouted for mercy!

*Tyldesley* (sneeringly) : Thou'rt over kind, Mistress Colcad.

*Joney* : Get thee gone, sirrah; and show not thy face at Scarlett again, lest I set the dogs on thee!

*Tyldesley* : I shall go when I am ready, Mistress Joney. (She moves towards the house). That were too unceremonious a departure (runs and catches hold of her). Let me have one little token of regard before thou leavest me.

*Joney* : Unhand me, sirrah, or I scream.

*Tyldesley* : That was ever a woman's weapon.—But give me the kiss of peace, then will I bid thee farewell.

*Joney* : Never!

*Tyldesley* : Then must I perforce help

myself to the nectar of thy ruby lips.

*Joney* (struggling to free herself from his embrace) : Let me go, Richard Tyldesley, or thou shalt suffer for thine insolence.

*Tyldesley* : Not before I have that token of thy love (he tries to kiss her and she screams : George rushes in and knocks him down).

*George* (holding Joney in his arms) : Just in time, eh! (To Tyldesley) Swine! So this is the way thou treatest defenceless women. In sooth art thou the worthy son of a worthy sire!

*Tyldesley* (rising to his feet and ruefully feeling his bruises) : At all events I am not the son of a traitor.

*George* : If thou dost not remove thyself hence within the space of three seconds, then shall I be compelled to assist thee; and I should not like further to spoil thy doubtful beauty.

*Tyldesley* : Dost thou think thou can frighten me, Christian?

*George* : Dost thou want me to help thy departure?

*Tyldesley* : I am not afraid of thy threats and bluffs, and for the blow thou hast given me, thou shalt receive four-fold!

*George* : Richly didst thou deserve the blow, and very willingly shall I give thee more. But I'll tell thee what I'll do, if thou wantest to prove that thou art the better man, I am willing to oblige thee in that respect, also (advancing). Come! let us do battle with our bare fists.

*Tyldesley* (retreating backwards) : In sooth I should not like to soil myself with the blood of a traitor's son.

*George* (seizing him by the neck) : Hellhound! an thou repeat those words, then I shall choke thee, e'en as I would the veriest reptile!

*Tyldesley* (alarmed) : Let go thy hold, Christian, thou'rt choking me.

*Joney* : Free the coward, George. (George frees him).

(Mrs Colquitt comes hobbling to the door with crutch and stick).

*Mrs. Colquitt* : What means this noise, Joney?

*Tyldesley* (ironically) : This charming would-be-son-in-law of yours tried to choke me.

*Mrs. Colquitt* : Shame on thee, George Christian. Better if thou went about thy own business.

*Joney* : Tyldesley tried to assault me, Mother, and would have succeeded had not Master Christian put in an appearance,

*George* : Yes, 'tis fortunate indeed that I did not leave the neighbourhood. I saw Tyldesley hanging around and thought there was something sinister afoot.

*Mrs. Colquitt* : Get thee in the house, wench. 'Tis not seemly that a daughter of Colquitt should be seen brawling with these men. (Joney enters house, waves her hand to George behind her mother's back). And as for you men, I want neither of you coming after my daughter, remember that. I must have a man of substance for my daughter's husband. (Thumping he stick on the ground and shaking her head to emphasize her words). And I'll have no penniless knaves haunting my house, so get ye gone, and let me not see your faces at Scarlett again. (Enters house).

*Tyldesley* : What an old cat! I don't envy thee, Christian; an thou succeed in winning the mother's affection as well as the daughter's, thy efforts will be worthy of commendation.

*George* : I want no parley with thee, Tyldesley, get thee gone!

*Tyldesley* : All right, I shall leave thee to thine own sweet reflections. (Sneeringly) Adieu, Lord Ronaldsway! (Exit).

*George* (sotto voce) : Hell-scum!—The old woman is a regular tartar—methinks cream-of-tartar would be a fitting epithet. But come what will, I'll marry Joney, though the whole world obstruct me.—'Twas lucky I had not gone very far from the house. The next time I catch Tyldesley hanging around here, he won't escape so lightly.—He's just such another sneak as his father, minding everyone's business but his own.—I wonder what is the news at home for me. I hope 'tis good. The estate of Ronaldsway was mine by right, from my grandfather, and the Lord of Mann had no right to confiscate it. If I win it back perhaps Mistress Mere Colcad will alter her opinions). (Exit). (Enter Caillagh from other side).

*Caillagh* : So, George Christian—Scarlett still holds charms for thee! Well, thou must not unduly suffer, e'en tho' she be a daughter of thy father's enemy. (Enter Tyldesley furtively looking around him, the Caillagh draws a veil around her face, Tyldesley sees her and accosts her).

*Tyldesley* : Who art thou, and what dost thou here?

*Caillagh* : Ask that question of thyself, Tyldesley.

*Tyldesley* : Thou knowest me?

*Caillagh* : Too well I know thee, Tyldesley! (draws her veil aside). Knowest thou me?

*Tyldesley* (in terror) : Caillagh ny gue-shag! The Hag of the Spells!

*Caillagh* : Ah, I see thou dost know me. Hast ever heard of the prophecies I made when Illiam Dhone was foully murdered on Hango Hill?

*Tyldesley* (with assumed bravado) : Yes, I have heard of your silly twaddle.

*Caillagh* : Thou thinkest them silly? Have they not come true?

*Tyldesley* : What would hap would hap without thy silly gabble.

*Caillagh* : Have a care, Tyldesley! Knowest thou not that I have power over life and death? (Tyldesley cringes with fear). Thy time has not yet come—but come it will as sure as the sun will rise o'er yonder hill!

*Tyldesley* : Dost thou threaten me? Pshaw! Thou'rt nought but a silly babbling old woman.

*Caillagh* : We shall see,—we shall see! (Exit drawing her veil round her face).

*Voice* (sepulchral) : Beware of the Curse of the Clan Cristeen! (followed by mocking laughter fading away in the distance).

*Tyldesley* (in affright) : Curse the old hag. 'Tis fit to make one's flesh creep! (Exit).

CURTAIN. End of Scene VI.

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#### SCENE VII. Ronaldsway (exterior).

*Mrs Christian* (sitting in the garden outside of the house, talking to herself) : My poor Illiam! My poor Illiam Dhone whom they foully did to death. But truly is he avenged. In a short space of time there will neither be root nor branch of his enemies left. How wonderfully and mysteriously hath God wrought to help us. Here we are back in our ancestral home, a thing which we never hoped or expected. Oh, if my poor Illiam were only alive, how happy we might spend the rest of our days. My dear Illiam—(she falls asleep and beholds a vision of her husband, with a happy smile upon his face. She wakes)—yes, I shall be coming soon to join you, dear husband (rubs her eyes)—Dear me! I must have been asleep. I dreamt my poor Illiam was happy, and wished me to sanction the union of Joney Colcad and George. Ah, well! I suppose he knows best! I shall not stand in their way, if 'tis Illiam's wish. It shall not be thwarted! (Enter Dicky).

*Dicky* : Have you heard the news?

*Mrs. Christian* : What news, Dicky?

*Dicky* : Rutchy Tyldesley is dead.

*Mrs. Christian* : Dead!

*Dicky* : Yes, shot dead!

*Mrs. Christian* : Shot dead—how did that hap?

*Dicky* : He picked a quarrel with one of the soldiers over in the Castle Arms yandhar, and in a fit of temper the soldier shot him dead.

*Mrs. Christian* : Thus ends the blood-feud—the curse of the Clan Cristeen—all the males are dead now and thus will their names become extinct, yes, even as Caillagh ny gueshag prophesied.

*Dicky* : 'Twould be as well were all the females dead too, Mistress, they're a cussed bad lot; lock, stock and barrel.

*Mrs. Christian* : God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit for some of them to live, Dicky; so we must e'en rest content.

*Dicky* : You're right, Mistress, you're right, but I'll never forget till the end of my life how my poor master was done to death. (Enter George and Joney).

*George* : Mother! I've brought her to you. Will you give us your blessing?

*Mrs. Christian* : George, I've been against your forming an alliance with one of the families who were at enmity with your father, but I now see that I was wrong. (To Joney) Forgive me, child, for the antipathy I felt to all your race. (She kisses Joney).

*Joney* : I do freely forgive you, Mistress Christian. We have all suffered through no fault of our own making.

*Mrs. Christian* (placing Joney's hand in George's) : I bless you, my children, and praise God that the curse of the Clan Cristeen is now at an end—

*Voice* (sepulchral) : Ay, the curse of the Clan Cristeen is o'er!

*Mrs. Christian* : Hark, what was that?

*George* : I heard nought, mother!

*Mrs. Christian* : 'Twas like a voice from the dead.—With the death of young Tyldesley disappears the last male of the race, and thus has the Caillagh's prophecy come true. I do not know why people called it a curse of the Clan Cristeen, for I am very sure that the noble gentle spirit of my dear husband freely forgave all his enemies. But whatever enmity existed between our family and the Colcads will now be happily at an end. I bless you, my dear children, from the bottom of my heart, and I know that my dear Illiam in heaven blesses the union also.

*Dicky* (proffering his hand to Joney) : Forgive me too, Mistress Colcad. The love which I have always borne to the Christian family caused me to harden my heart against all his foes.

*Joney* (shaking hands) : I do not wish to have an enemy in the world.

(Vision of Illiam Dhone with a happy smile upon his face).

FINIS.

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